

Stored-up Food

A discussion of Pācittaya 38

Khematto Bhikkhu

Pācittiya 38 concerns the issue of how long a bhikkhu may eat staple and non-staple food that has been formally received. The following is a translation of that rule from the Thai Recension of the Canon with notes and passages from other rules and from the Commentary, showing that:

- 1) According to this rule, once staple or non-staple food has been received hand-to-hand by any bhikkhu—regardless of his intention, whether or not the food has been cooked, even if he doesn't know that it is food—no bhikkhu may eat it on any following day, regardless of what happens to the food in the meantime.
- 2) The allowance given in the Commentary to re-receive, on a subsequent day, food that has been abandoned to a novice and eat it is not in agreement with the Canon.

A few points to keep in mind when considering this discussion are:

1) In formulating the rules in the Vinaya, the pattern is that the Buddha would first make a statement of the rule. Then, if any reason arose to make a major change in the rule, he would make a new statement. Finally, as the Buddha and the monks worked out the details of how to apply the rule, that information would be recorded in the Vibhaṅga. This consisted mainly of arriving at precise definitions of the words involved and defining the exceptions to the rule. In some cases, however, there is no recorded incident that prompted the Buddha to reformulate the rule, but the final working-out of the rule differs significantly from the way the Buddha made the rule statement. In these cases the Buddha left the rule statement as it was rather than revise the rule statement to reflect the changes. Examples include NP 27, in which the bhikkhu doesn't actually have to give the weavers anything, and Pc 72, in which if a bhikkhu criticizes the training rules at any time—not just when the Pāṭimokkha is being recited—he incurs an offense. The Cullavagga (X.4) suggests that the Buddha himself gave preference to the way the bhikkhus worked out the rules in the Vibhaṅga over the wording in the rule statement (See BMC, pp. 11–12). In both of these examples, the change serves to make the rule both simpler and stricter. The Vibhaṅga's treatment of the rule statement in this rule has the same effect. This means that the Vibhaṅga is the final guide to interpreting the rules: Wherever there is a disagreement between the rule statement and the Vibhaṅga, the Vibhaṅga takes precedence.

2) The final part of the Vibhaṅga, listing the non-offense clauses, serves three purposes: a) to make exceptions to the rule, in which case the non-offense clause overrides the word-analysis, b) to clarify areas where the explanation in the rule statement and word-analysis are unclear, and c) to clear up any doubts that an overly scrupulous monk might have about actions that clearly are not offenses in the rule statement and word-analysis, in which case the non-offense clause confirms the word-analysis.

For examples of the first, monks who are insane or the first offender inciting the formulation of that rule are exempted. All of the factors in the word-analysis are fulfilled, but the non-offense clauses exempting an insane monk or the first offender overrides it.

An example of the second case occurs in Pc 10, in which getting another to dig in the earth—an offense under the rule—is defined as *aññaṃ āṇāpeti*: “He commands another.” The word-analysis doesn't give any more explanation of what entails giving a command, such as whether the command has to be phrased using the imperative tense, or mention digging, to qualify as an offense. However, the non-offense clauses specify that saying, “Know this,” “Bring this,”

“Give this,” “I need this,” or “Make this allowable,” are not offenses—meaning that they don’t count as commands. So in this case they serve to clarify the meaning of the word *āṇāpeti*: “he commands.”

For an example of the third, the rule statement of Pr 3 starts, “Should any bhikkhu intentionally deprive a human being of life, ...” and the non-offense clause begins with, “Non-offenses: unintentionally, ...” According to the rule statement, unintentional killing—defined in the word-analysis—would not be an offense, but the non-offense clauses repeat that fact, confirming the rule statement and word-analysis.

In non-offense clauses of type C, the presence or absence of the non-offense clause doesn’t make a difference in interpreting the rule, as it simply reinforces and restates what is in the rule statement and word-analysis. The compilers could add these in places they felt monks might be overly anxious, or not.

However, in non-offenses of type A and B, the presence or absence of the non-offense clause does make a difference. Consequently, for any action that either 1) clearly would count as an offense, or 2) falls in a gray area not defined as an offense or not in the word-analysis: If the action isn’t specified as a non-offense, then a bhikkhu wanting to be scrupulous should go on the assumption that the action would count as an offense. And we should assume that the compilers, being scrupulous themselves, intended it to count as an offense.

3) The Canon began as an oral tradition, in which repetitive passages are easier to memorize and variants stand out. Also, as every word had to be memorized, efficiency was a high priority: There wasn’t room for unnecessary explanation, and the style was necessarily terse. Because of that, when a passage doesn’t follow the pattern found in other passages, it should be assumed that the difference is intentional and meaningful. Anyone memorizing the text would definitely notice the difference, and one who understood how to interpret such differences would know what it meant. What that means in this case is that when something is listed as a non-offense under one rule, but not mentioned under a similar rule, it should be understood as an intentional difference between the rules, meaning that there is no exception under the second rule.

4) For one interpreting the rules for the purpose of living in line with them, one should make the following assumptions: a) The compilers of the Vibhaṅga were intelligent enough to be consistent within the discussion of each rule. Any explanation based on the premise that they were not consistent should give way to an explanation showing that they were. b) The compilers were well enough acquainted with the contingencies surrounding each rule that they knew which factors were and were not crucial in determining what is and is not an offense. Any explanation that adds or subtracts factors from those mentioned in the Vibhaṅga should give way to one that follows the Vibhaṅga’s analysis.

5) Any attempt to use the Great Standards in taking the explanations for one rule and applying them to override the explanations given for another rule should be rejected, inasmuch as those Standards are meant solely for issues where nothing has already been explicitly forbidden or allowed. The Vibhaṅga for one rule cannot be used to rewrite the Vibhaṅga for another; otherwise there would be no end to the rewriting of the rules.

PĀCITTIYA 38

Note: Passages from other rules or from the Commentaries are in blue. Numbers in square brackets are from the Thai edition of the Canon. Numbers in curly braces are from the Myanmar edition. In the PTS edition, the passage starts from Vin IV 86.

[512] {252} tena samayena buddho bhagavā
sāvatthiyaṃ viharati jetavaneanāthapiṇḍikassa
ārāme.

At that time the Buddha, the Blessed One, was
staying near Sāvattthī, in Jeta’s Grove,
Anāthapiṇḍika’s Monastery.

tena kho pana samayena āyasmato ānandassa
upajjhāyo āyasmāveḷaṭṭhasīso araṇṇe viharati.

so piṇḍāya caritvā bahum piṇḍapātāṃ
labhitvā sukkhaṃ kūrāṃ ārāmaṃ haritvā
sukkhāpetvā nikkhipati

yadā āhārena attho hoti tadā udakena temetvā
bhuñjati

cirena gāmaṃ piṇḍāya pavisati.

bhikkhū āyasmantaṃ veḷaṭṭhasīsaṃ
etadavocum kissa tvaṃ āvuso cirena gāmaṃ
piṇḍāya pavisasīti.

athakho āyasmā veḷaṭṭhasīso bhikkhūnaṃ
etamatthaṃ ārocesi.

kiṃ pana tvaṃ āvuso sannidhikārakaṃ
bhojanaṃ bhuñjasīti.

evamāvusoti.

ye te bhikkhū appicchā .pe. te ujjhāyanti
khīyanti vipācenti

kathaṃ hi nāma āyasmā veḷaṭṭhasīso
sannidhikārakaṃ bhojanaṃ bhuñjissatīti .pe.

saccaṃ kira tvaṃ veḷaṭṭhasīsa
sannidhikārakaṃ bhojanaṃ bhuñjasīti.

saccaṃ bhagavāti.

vigarahi buddho bhagavā kathaṃ hi nāma
tvaṃ veḷaṭṭhasīsa sannidhikārakaṃ bhojanaṃ
bhuñjissasi netaṃ veḷaṭṭhasīsa appasannānaṃ
vā pasādāya pasannānaṃ vā bhiyyobhāvāya
.pe.

evaṃca pana bhikkhave imaṃ sikkhāpadaṃ
uddiseyyātha

**{253} yo pana bhikkhu sannidhikārakaṃ
khādaniyaṃ vā bhojaniyaṃ vā khādeyya
vā bhuñjeyya vā pācittiyanti.**

And at that time Ven. Ānanda's preceptor,
Ven. Veḷaṭṭhasīsa was staying in the
wilderness.

Having gone for alms, having gotten much
alms-food, taking dried boiled rice to the
monastery—having dried it—he kept it.

When he needed food, having soaked it in
water, he would consume it.

He entered the village for alms (once) in a
long time.

The monks said to Ven. Veḷaṭṭhasīsa, “Why do
you enter the village for alms (once) in a long
time?”

So Ven. Veḷaṭṭhasīsa reported the matter to the
monks.

“But friend, are you consuming stored-up
food?”

“Yes, friends.”

Those monks who were modest ... criticized
and complained and spread it about:

“How can Ven. Veḷaṭṭhasīsa consume stored-
up food? ...”

“Is it true, as they say, Veḷaṭṭhasīsa, that you
consume stored-up food?”

“It's true, O Blessed One.”

The Buddha, the Blessed One, rebuked him:
“Veḷaṭṭhasīsa, how can you consume stored-up
food? This neither inspires faith in the
faithless nor increases the faithful ...

“Monks, you should recite this training rule
like this:

**“Should any monk chew or consume
stored-up staple or non-staple food, it is to
be confessed.”**

This is the rule statement. There were no incidents that prompted the Buddha to amend this rule. What follows is the word-analysis—the precise working-out of the rule that the Buddha and the monks arrived at through putting the rule into practice. Some more literal alternative translations would be “Should any monk, having stored it up/while storing it up/with the making of a store/in the manner of making a store, chew or consume staple or non-staple food, it is to be confessed.”¹

[513] {254} yo panāti yo yādiso .pe. bhikkhūti
.pe. ayaṃ imasmim atthe adhippeto
bhikkhūti.

sannidhikārakaṃ nāma ajja paṭiggahitaṃ
aparajja khāditaṃ hoti.

“Should any” Any (monk) of any kind ...
monk ... “Monk” is meant in this case.

‘Stored-up’ means it is received today and
eaten (chewed) on a later day.

The controversy around this rule centers on the definition of this word, so it is worth looking into in detail. Here are the English equivalents of the individual words:

sannidhikāraṇaṃ: having stored up; with the making of a store

nāma: name; what is named (used in definitions like “means” in English)

ajja: today

[*paṭiggaṇhāti*: he receives (used as the technical term for a bhikkhu to formally receive something)]

[*paṭiggahita*: past participle of *paṭiggaṇhāti*: received]

paṭiggahitaṃ: neuter form of *paṭiggahita*, matching *khādanīyaṃ* and *bhojanīyaṃ* in the previous sentence

aparajju: the next day; a following day

[*khādati*: he chews; eats]

[*khādita*: past participle of *khādati*: chewed; eaten]

khāditaṃ: neuter form of *khādita*

hoti: it is

Looking at this definition, several points stand out:

- 1) The word *sannidhikāraṇaṃ* is defined in terms of adjectives describing the food, rather than adverbs modifying the act of eating. Specifically, they are past participles (like the English word, “stored”). They are not modified by a noun in the instrumental, as in a passive sentence (such as *attanā*: “by oneself,” or *bhikkhunā*: “by a monk,” which would give, “It is received by the monk,” which is equivalent to, “The monk receives it.”) The definition doesn’t specify who receives the food, but the verb *paṭiggaṇhāti* is used in a technical sense for bhikkhus formally receiving things, so it must mean a bhikkhu.
- 2) There is no mention at all of actually storing the food—who is storing it or where, or whether or not the monk retains possession of it.
- 3) “Storing up” here is defined as occurring on or starting from a previous day.

Taken together, these three points mean that as soon as the monk receives the food, he counts as storing it up. Regardless of what he does with it after receiving it, even if he keeps it for only for a few seconds and then throws or gives it away, he cannot re-receive it on a subsequent day (or simply keep it) and eat it. As we will see below, this is confirmed by the absence² in the non-offense clause of the allowance in the parallel passage under NP 23, which *does* allow a monk to re-receive tonics that have been relinquished without any sense of attachment:

From NP 23: anāpatti antosattāhaṃ adhiṭṭheti, vissajjeti, nassati, vinassati, ḍayhati, acchinditvā gaṇhanti, vissāsaṃ gaṇhanti, anupasampannassa cattenā vantenā muttenā anapekkho datvā paṭilabhitvā paribhuñjati, ummattakassa, ādikammikassāti.

Non-offenses: Within seven days he determines it for use, abandons it, it gets lost, destroyed, burnt, snatched away, or taken on trust; or—having given it away to an unordained person, as if relinquishing it, vomiting it, releasing it—he receives it in return and makes use of it; for one who is insane; for the first offender.

- 4) The following passage from the Vibhaṅga to Pc 40 defines what it means to receive the food:

From Pc 40: adinnaṃ nāma appaṭiggahitakam vuccati.

dinnaṃ nāma kāyena vā kāyapaṭibaddhena vā nissaggiyena vā dente hatthapāse ṭhito kāyena vā kāyapaṭibaddhena vā paṭiggaṇhāti etaṃ dinnaṃ nāma.

Whatever is not given is called ‘not received.’

“Given” means: As he/she is giving with the body or something connected to the body or by dropping, standing within a hatthapāsa, he receives it with the body or something

connected to the body. That is called “given.”

In other words, “received” and “given,” in the sense defined here, are equivalent. In this definition there is no mention of the bhikkhu’s intention in receiving whatever is given, or even of whether he knows he is receiving something edible. Simply accepting an edible hand-to-hand makes it count as “received.”³

THE COMMENTARY’S ALLOWANCE

The Commentary to this passage, however, contains this allowance:

From the Commentary to this rule: yaṃ bhikkhū nirapekkhā sāmaṇeraṇaṃ pariccajanti, tañce sāmaṇerā nidahitvā denti, sabbaṃ vaṭṭati. sayāṃ paṭiggahetvā apariccattameva hi dutiyadvase na vaṭṭati.

Whatever monks—without concern/desire—give away to novices: If the novices, having stored it, give it, that is all allowable. If he has received it himself and has not abandoned it, it is not allowable on the second day.

No explanation is given in the Commentary of how this conclusion was reached, but the Sub-commentary has:

From the Sub-commentary to this rule: Yadaggena hi paṭiggahaṇaṃ vijahati, tadaggena sannidhipi na karoti vijahitapaṭiggahaṇassa appaṭiggahitasadisattā. Paṭiggahetvā nidahiteyeva ca sannidhipaccayā āpatti vuttā. Paṭiggahetvā ekarattaṃ vītināmitassetam adhivacanan’ti hi vuttaṃ.

From the time he abandons the receipt (acceptance), he is not storing up, because of the equivalence of the abandoning of what was received with its non-receipt (non-acceptance). Only that which has been received and kept is said to be an offense with storing up as a condition. Thus it is said, “This is a term for what has been received and passed beyond one night.”

There is nothing in the Vibhaṅga to this rule that supports the Sub-commentary’s assertion that abandoning something is equivalent to not having received it in the first place. If one accepted that principle in general, then one could retroactively nullify an offense for receiving money by abandoning it, and similarly with other offenses for receiving things like felt rugs, almsbowls, etc.

THEORIES IN SUPPORT OF THE COMMENTARY

A theory offered to support the Commentary here is that the commentator interpreted the absolute, *sannidhikāraṇaṃ*, as happening continuously, i.e., the monk has to store the food from the time it is offered until the time he eats it. Then this theory assumes that this chain of logic would be clear enough that the compilers of the Vibhaṅga felt no need to mention, in either the word-analysis or in the non-offense clause, the condition that the monk has to store the food himself the whole time.

There are several problems with this interpretation:

- 1) Absolutes can also refer to actions completed before the main verb. There is another verb form, the present participle, specifically indicating an action happening simultaneously with the main verb.
- 2) The Vibhaṅga, in explaining a rule, does not always conform to the literal meaning of the rule statement, even when the latter is explicit and clear (as in NP 27 and Pc 72). Still, the form in the Vibhaṅga is the definitive one as far as putting the rule into practice, as explained in the first point in the Introduction. It would be out of line with this principle to base an interpretation of a rule on an inference drawn from the grammatical form of a word in the rule statement—saying, in this case, that the agent of the sentence, the monk, must be the one storing the food.

3) There are other rules—those concerning the proper (storage) place in Mv.VI.32—that cover issues around actually storing food.

4) It is unlikely that this is the Commentary’s reasoning anyway, for two reasons: 1) The Commentary’s own explanation of the word *sannidhikāraṇaṃ* doesn’t mention anything like this, and even seems to go out of its way to avoid saying who is making the stockpile/store. 2) If the monk had to store the food himself to commit an offense, why is it only a novice who is allowed to store it for him? Why not a lay person? Or, for that matter, another bhikkhu?

From the Commentary to this rule: kāra karaṇaṃ kiriyāti atthato ekaṃ, sannidhikāro assāti sannidhikāraṃ; sannidhikārameva sannidhikāraṇaṃ

Thai translation of above passage: คำว่า การการณ กิริยา (ทั้ง ๓ นี้) โดยอรรถเป็นอันเดียวกัน. การทำความสะสมมีอยู่แก่ขาทนียะและโภชนียะนั้น; ฉะนั้น จึงชื่อว่าสันนิธิการ. สันนิธิการนั้นแหละ ชื่อว่า สันนิธิการก. ความว่า สันนิธิกิริยา (ความทำการสะสม). คำว่า สันนิธิการกนั้น เป็นชื่อ (แห่งขาทนียะโภชนียะ) ที่ภิกษุรับประเคนไว้ให้ค้างคืน

“Act, making, performance”: These are one in meaning. “There would be the making of a stockpile/store.”⁴: stockpile/store-making. That very stockpile/store-making: having stored up.

The words, “kāra, kārāṇa, kiriyā” (all three of these) in meaning are the same. There is storing up in regard to that staple or non-staple food, thus it is called “sannidhikāra.” That very “sannidhikāra” is called “sannidhikāraṇa.” The meaning is sannidhikiriyā (the act of storing up). The word, “sannidhikāraṇa” is a name (for the staple or non-staple food) that a bhikkhu receives to keep overnight. [or, alternatively: receives and makes it stay overnight.]

Another theory in support of the Commentary is that the Commentary is importing the non-offense clause from NP 23 to this rule. As noted above, that rule contains an allowance, overriding the rule statement and word-analysis, to re-receive and eat tonics that have been abandoned, meaning that under that rule a monk has to retain a sense of possession over the tonic—even if he isn’t actually storing it himself—for it to count as stored.

But as mentioned above, we should assume that the difference between the non-offense clause here and that at NP 23 was made intentionally to show that the rules function differently. If one followed the interpretation of this rule that if a monk gives away the food without expectation of getting it back, he can receive it on a later day and eat it without an offense, then this rule would function in the same way as NP 23—aside from the fact that under that rule, the offense is for *storing* it past seven days. We would expect to find the phrase in the non-offense clauses in the Vibhaṅga to this rule, “having given it away to an unordained person, as if relinquishing it, vomiting it, releasing it—he receives it in return and makes use of it,” in the non-offense clause.

If the compilers of the Commentary were invoking the Great Standards to justify importing that non-offense clause, that would be a misapplication of those Standards. Had the compilers of the Vibhaṅga meant for the principle under NP 23 to be applied here, they could have done so themselves.

It’s also possible that the Commentary is making an allowance for what had become common practice at the time. (This is not mutually exclusive with the previous reason.) If novices were in fact re-offering food to monks, then that would explain the specific mention of novices.⁵ This theory explains the Commentary’s allowance but does not justify it.

None of the reasons mentioned above offers convincing grounds for accepting the Commentary’s allowance as valid. Below is the continuation of the word-analysis from Pc 38:

khādanīyaṃ nāma pañca bhojanāni yamakālikāṃ sattāhakālikāṃ yāvajīvikāṃ ṭhapetvā avasesaṃ khādanīyaṃ nāma.

‘Non-staple food’ means: Setting aside the five foods, wrong-time (juice-drinks), seven-day (tonics), and lifetime (medicines), what is left

bhojanīyaṃ nāma pañca bhojanāni odano kummāso sattu maccho maṃsaṃ.

khādisāmi bhuñjissāmīti paṭiggaṇhāti āpatti dukkaṭassa.

From the Commentary to this rule:
paṭiggaṇhāti āpatti dukkaṭassāti evaṃ sannidhikataṃ yaṃkiñci yāvakālikaṃ vā yāmakālikaṃ vā ajjhoharitukāmatāya gaṇhantassa paṭiggahaṇe tāva āpatti dukkaṭassa.

over is called staple food.

‘Staple food’ means the five foods: cooked grain, kummāsa, meal, fish, and meat.

(Thinking,) “I will chew it; I will consume it,” one receives it: an offense of wrong-doing.

“One receives it: an offense of wrong-doing”: In the receiving of whatever stored-up (food) to be consumed at the right time or (juice-drinks) to be consumed during the hours (after noon) that one is taking out of a desire to take into the mouth: To that extent it is an offense of wrong-doing.

This could be interpreted in two ways: 1) The monk receives the food intending to store it up and eat it on a following day, or 2) He re-receives food that has been received on a previous day, intending to eat it. (Pc 37 has exactly the same clause, not specifying whether the dukkaṭa is only for accepting the food at the wrong time, or also for accepting food at the right time, intending to eat it at the wrong time.) There is no mention of whether he knows that it has previously been stored, or what his intention was when he gave it away. If that factor made a difference, i.e., giving the food away without desire to get it back absolved the monk of an offense, then this is another place we would expect to see it mentioned. This is more evidence that the Commentary’s allowance is, in fact, an allowance.

The Commentary adopts the second interpretation: “It” here means food already stored up. In line with the Commentary’s above allowance, it must be interpreting this as food that one has received on a previous day and given away, but without abandoning desire for it.

Also, it’s important to note that the factor of intention here, “(thinking,) ‘I will chew it; I will consume it,’” applies only to this derived offense, not to the full offense. As the definition of “receiving” in Pc 40 shows, neither intention nor knowledge are factors in making food formally received. That means that if a monk receives food, not intending to eat it, stores it overnight, and then changes his mind and eats it, the food counts as properly received under Pc 40, but he still incurs the full offense here.

A further theory which may explain the Sub-commentary’s explanation of the Commentary is based on assuming the opposite: The factor of intention here, “(thinking,) ‘I will chew it; I will consume it,’” applies to the full offense as well. The theory then claims that by giving away the food the bhikkhu undoes his intention in receiving it. But, as noted above, the Sub-commentary’s assertion that abandoning something is equivalent to not having received it in the first place is not supported by the Canon. There is nothing to indicate that in order to incur the full offense the monk has to maintain the intention to consume the food continuously until the time he eats it.

ajjhohāre ajjhohāre āpatti pācittiyassa.

[514] {255} sannidhikārake sannidhikāraḥkaṇṇī khādanīyaṃ vā bhojanīyaṃ vā khādati vā bhuñjati vā āpatti pācittiyassa.

sannidhikārake vematiko khādanīyaṃ vā bhojanīyaṃ vā khādati vā bhuñjati vā āpatti pācittiyassa.

sannidhikārake asannidhikāraḥkaṇṇī khādanīyaṃ vā bhojanīyaṃ vā khādati vā bhuñjati vā āpatti pācittiyassa.

For each mouthful (that one eats) there is a pācittiya offense.

In the case it is stored-up, one chews or consumes staple or non-staple food, perceiving it to be stored-up: a pācittiya offense.

In the case it is stored-up, one chews or consumes staple or non-staple food, doubtful (about whether it is stored-up): a pācittiya offense.

In the case it is stored-up, one chews or consumes staple or non-staple food, perceiving it to be not stored-up: a pācittiya

offense.

This shows that if a monk receives food, not knowing that it had been received on a previous day, he still incurs the full offense. This also would cover the case where a monk gets mixed up about which food he accepted today and which he is storing up, without intending to eat it.

In this sentence, *sannidhikāraka* functions as a noun/adjective: “that which is stored-up,” appearing in the locative case. The accusative form, *sannidhikārakam*, is the form used as an absolutive/adverb.

yāmakālikam sattāhakālikam yāvajīvikam
āhāratthāya paṭiggaṇhāti āpatti dukkaṭassa.

ajjhohāre ajjhohāre āpatti dukkaṭassa.

asannidhikārake sannidhikārakasaññī āpatti
dukkatassa.

asannidhikārake vematiko āpatti dukkaṭassa.

asannidhikārake asannidhikārakasaññī
anāpatti.

[515] {256} anāpatti

yāvakālikam yāvakāle nidahitvā bhuñjati

yāmakālikam yāme nidahitvā bhuñjati

sattāhakālikam sattāham nidahitvā bhuñjati

yāvajīvikam sati paccaye paribhuñjati

ummattakassa ādikammikassāti.

One accepts wrong-time (juice-drinks), seven-day (tonics), and lifetime (medicines) for the sake of food: an offense of wrong-doing.

For each mouthful (that one eats) there is an offense of wrong-doing.

In the case it is not stored-up, (one chews or consumes it) perceiving it to be stored-up: an offense of wrong-doing.

In the case it is not stored-up, (one chews or consumes it) doubtful (about whether it is stored-up): an offense of wrong-doing.

In the case it is not stored-up, (one chews or consumes it) perceiving it to be not stored-up: no offense.

Non offenses:

Having kept, during the right time, (food) to be consumed at the right time, one consumes it;

Or: During the right time, one keeps and consumes (food) to be consumed at the right time;

having kept, during the hours (after noon), (juice-drinks) to be consumed during the hours (after noon), one consumes it;

having kept, for (up to) seven days, (a tonic) to be consumed within seven days, one consumes it;

one consumes lifetime (medicines) when there is a reason;

for one who is insane; for the first offender.

These are the non-offense clauses. As noted above, there is no parallel passage to NP 23’s non-offense clause here making an exception for food that a bhikkhu has relinquished to lay people. And it is in keeping with the style of the Vinaya that no mention is made of that passage to explain the discrepancy. The non-offense clauses—here as everywhere else in the Vibhaṅga—do not address the issue of what are not non-offenses. So it is not surprising that, although the non-offenses under NP 23 include the allowance to re-receive tonics, the question of whether a similar allowance would hold here is not discussed. As mentioned above, that implies that there is no allowance: Staple and non-staple food may not be re-received in the same way.

There is no non-offense mentioned for simply storing food. That is because the only offenses under this rule are for *eating* stored-up food and for *receiving* it with the intention to eat it. There is no

offense for simply storing food mentioned in the rule in the first place. That means if a monk receives food, not intending to eat it, changes his mind and stores it overnight, intending to eat it on a later day, then changes his mind again and doesn't eat it, he incurs no offense.

| aṭṭhamasikkhāpadam niṭṭhitam.

| The eighth training rule is finished.

CONCLUSION

In the case of this rule, as in others in the Vinaya, the explanation in the Vibhaṅga takes the statement of the rule, made by the Buddha, and puts it into a clearly defined, practical form. The interpretation the compilers arrived at is both strict and simple. However, some object to this interpretation, on the grounds that it goes against the values of the Dhamma, specifically in two areas: contentment and unburdensomeness. The argument is that monks should not be above eating left-over food, and that allowing the lay people to re-offer food makes their job easier and prevents waste.

In response to the first objection, the rule doesn't prohibit eating lay people's left-overs. MN 82 tells the story of Ven. Raṭṭhapāla returning home after attaining arahantship. He goes on almsround to his parents' house and—after his father drives him away—asks a slave woman to pour the left-over rice into his bowl rather than throw it away.

As to the second point, if someone brings more food than can be used in one day, it is not difficult to divide the dish, serve just enough for that day, and serve the rest on a later day. As for food that the monks give back, if the lay people know that they can't re-offer food to monks, then they will have no qualms about keeping it and eating it themselves (especially if it's cheesecake). If they don't want to keep it, they can give it to a charity or feed it to animals. The Buddha taught that even animals are worthy of compassion and worthy to receive generosity. In AN 3:58, the Buddha says, "I tell you, Vaccha, even if a person throws the rinsings of a bowl or a cup into a village pool or pond, thinking, 'May whatever animals live here feed on this,' that would be a source of merit, to say nothing of what is given to human beings." Giving food to animals is a form of merit, not a waste, which means that it is not difficult at all to ensure that no food goes to waste.

The simple and strict interpretation of Pc 38 stated in the first paragraph actually simplifies a monk's relationship to food and to the lay community offering it to him:

Once staple or non-staple food has been received hand-to-hand by any bhikkhu—regardless of his intention, whether or not the food has been cooked, even if he doesn't know that it is food—no bhikkhu may eat it on any following day, regardless of what happens to the food in the meantime.

NOTES

1. The word *sannidhikāraṇam* is derived from *sannidhiṃ karoti*: "he stores up," or more literally, "he makes a store/stockpile/stash." Here, however, as we will see in the definition below, it is used in a technical sense, defined as (food) accepted by any monk on a previous day, regardless of what happened to it in the meantime. So, in context, "stored-up staple or non-staple food" is equally accurate.

There are many other such technical terms in the Vinaya, for example: 1) In the context of Pc 35, *pavārita*, literally, "invited," means "having turned down an offer of further food (from a donor standing within hatthapāsa)." 2) In the rules dealing with the Kaṭhina, *kaṭhinam attharitam*, literally, "to spread the robe-sewing frame," means "to accept the Kaṭhina privileges, (relaxing some of the rules dealing with robe-cloth)." 3) *saddhivihārika*, literally, "one who lives together with," means "a student, specifically in the context of his relationship with his preceptor." In all of these cases, the technical meaning of the term is very different from and could not be guessed at just by looking at the literal meaning. Similarly, the technical meaning of *sannidhikāraṇam* is not determined by its literal definition, or by its meaning in common usage.

The grammatical form of the word is somewhat unclear. It occurs in two rules in the Vinaya, this one and NP 23, on storing tonics. In that rule, as well as in the three occurrences in the suttas, the word is either an absolutive or an action noun used adverbially, equivalent to an absolutive.

Under NP 23 (Vin III 251), the word-analysis and the Commentary both treat the word as an absolutive. However, in Pc 38 (Vin IV 86 foll.) the word-analysis defines *sannidhikāraṇam* in terms of adjectives (past participles)

modifying the food. In the Vibhaṅga, the locative form of the word, *sannidhikārake*, occurs in the passage defining the derived offenses, and the Commentary in this case seems to also interpret it as an adjective, as we will see below. According to Dr. Margaret Cone of the Pali Text Society, who has been writing a Dictionary of Pali for the last 30 years, there are three ways of interpreting this:

It's important to remember that Pali was a living language at the time of the Buddha, and its grammar hadn't been standardized in the way the grammars of modern languages like English or French have been since the 17th and 18th centuries. Any living language has irregularities and idioms that defy easy classification. Assuming that the Vibhaṅga was compiled during and shortly after the time that the Buddha was still living, its compilers would have been native speakers. It's highly possible that their sense of the grammar of their own language was more fluid than our sense of that grammar, and they—having been trained in a lineage going back to the Buddha—would have been in a better position than we are to interpret the meaning.

2. This is not absence of evidence implying evidence of absence. It is clearly evident that the allowance is in fact absent in the non-offense clause.

3. This definition limits the scope of the word 'stored-up' to food that a bhikkhu has received. That means that if lay people store up food prior to offering it to monks, the monks are allowed to accept and make use of it. It makes practical sense that the monks aren't responsible for what the lay people do with the food before offering it. But once a monk has received food, he is responsible for ensuring that he doesn't eat it on a subsequent day, which would involve teaching the lay community not to re-offer monks' left-overs to monks.

4. The idiom "...*assāti attbo*" is common in definitions in the Commentary and Sub-commentary. In many cases, the word *assa* could function either as the genitive pronoun "in regard to/of/for him/her/it" or as the optative form of the verb *as* "to be," in other words, "he/she/it would be ...: that's the meaning." But in some examples, only the second meaning fits. Because of that, the reading, "There would be the making of a stockpile/store" seems preferable to the Thai translation, which interprets it as the first possibility: "There is storing up in regard to that staple or non-staple food."

5. This is consistent with the following passage from AN 5:80, lending further support to the interpretation that it makes no difference who is storing the food. Monks living without monastery attendants and novices would probably give left-over food to animals, so there would be no chance of it being re-offered, whereas in a monastery with monastery attendants and novices, it would be natural to give left-over food to them, and easy for them to offer it again to monks out of confusion, carelessness, or a desire to be frugal.

"And further, in the course of the future there will be monks who will live in close association with monastery attendants and novices. As they interact with monastery attendants and novices, they can be expected to live committed to many kinds of stored-up possessions and to making large boundary posts for fields and crops."

It's also possible that the motivation was excessive scrupulousness: How can one ever know for sure that there is no trace of left-over food in one's bowl, especially if it's made of clay, and has a rough surface and tiny fissures? The discussion in the Commentary just prior to stating the allowance concerns just that—perhaps implying that the allowance could be used to make certain that one wasn't eating stored-up food. Of course, this is still not a good reason to alter a rule.